

The Arlington Connection

Barbara Kanninen came out to show her support for democracy. Arlington Police estimated 5,000 Arlingtonians came out to stretch "Hands Across Arlington" from Shirlington to Walker Chapel along Glebe Road.

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PHOTO BY EDEN BROWN/THE CONNECTION

I HAVE FRIENDS EVERYWHERE.

Observing Lent in Different Ways
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Resistance Builds Community
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LOVE, HOPE, PEACE, UNITY and CARE
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SENIOR LIVING

Seniors Stand Up for Democracy at No Kings Day

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

Both sides of Jefferson Street at Baileys Crossroads in Falls Church are lined with hundreds of protestors waving flags and holding handmade signs on Saturday, March 28 for several hours. The event team responsible for keeping order and assisting protestors if needed are identifiable by their orange vests. Cars drive by honking their horns in support, and a roar goes up from the crowd.

Bob Harris, a member of the Goodwin House Bailey's Silver Panthers and one of the organizers of the local event, said he had been working with the national No Kings Day organization on the mechanics of today's event. "We had a couple of Zoom calls with thousands of people nationwide and followed up with a couple of local meetings to identify local peacekeepers and care bears to be in charge of certain sectors of our demonstration route.

"The peacekeepers roam up and down their assigned areas to watch out for injuries and keep the crowd organized and out of the street. Last time a couple of people had fallen. We coordinate with the Fairfax County police."

Sharon Simkin, one of the peacekeepers who was a long-time Arlington resident and now lives at Goodwin House, says their training involved a session on how to cope with anyone causing a disruption during the peaceful protest. "We play-acted what to do, and it gave me more confidence in case something happens. But I don't think it

is very likely."

Harris added it was helpful in case they need to defuse any craziness.

Donna Cartwright, a resident of Goodwin House formerly from Arlington, has set up a chair along the sidewalk. She had back surgery just a few days ago but wasn't about to let it stop her and was part of the organizing team. Her job was to be in charge of the rollators and wheelchairs. "But I don't think there will be as many today. It's too cold." A large gray shawl is draped around Cartwright's neck, and she had been lending it out to some of the older people when they got too chilly.

"I'm here today because I believe very strongly ... VERY strongly in peaceful protest." Cartwright has been attending demonstrations for years and says she was remembering years ago when she took her two daughters to a protest and they asked why people were carrying coat hangers. "It was an abortion protest; I am pro-abortion."

Robin Overholt from Arlington, is sitting beside Cartwright. Her explanation about her presence at the demonstration is muffled by the large hog nose affixed to her face. "I don't want a king; I want someone who cares about health care and taking care of people."

Anjali and Piper are waving American flags and holding up signs which they have helped their mother create. Anjali says, "We're here to protest," and her sister adds, "No kings." Their mother explains, "We wanted to let them know they have a voice in democracy." She says their grandmother is also here at the demonstration

with them from Houston. It is the first time she has ever protested. "We have three generations."

Jane C, also a resident of Goodwin House and member of the Silver Panthers, says we need to have someone sane in control of our country. Why did he even start this war that he can't get us out of?" She has two handfuls of flags for anyone who wants one. Jane says she hasn't demonstrated for a number of years but this current situation got her out. Jane adds her 9-year-old grandson was at a different demonstration in S. Arlington earlier in the day carrying a sign he made saying, "I like ice cream. I don't like ICE."



Anjali and Piper hold up signs they have helped make for today's protest. They are with their mother and grandmother from Houston and represent three generations of protestors.



Protestors line up along Jefferson Street at Bailey's Crossroads in a local "No Kings" demonstration Saturday, March 28.



Donna Cartwright from Goodwin House is in charge of rollators and wheelchairs at the demonstration.



Jane C, a member of the Goodwin House Baileys Silver Panthers, who helped organize this neighborhood event, is handing out flags to protestors.



Seniors are out in full force "working to save our democracy."

Arlington Churches Practice Lent Each in Their Own Way

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

Lent in the Christian religion is a serious time marked by prayer, fasting and repentance in the time before Good Friday and Easter Sunday. During pagan times, rebirth of Spring was sometimes celebrated by burying a corpse with tubers on it. When the flowers came up in the spring, life came again, resurrection.

Today Lent is often commemorated with ashes in various forms reminding us that human beings came from dust and shall return to dust. Many churches place ashes in the sign of the cross on a parishioner's forehead on Ash Wednesday, the first day of the Lenten season.

Rev. Craig A. Harcum, pastor of Macedonia Baptist Church at 3212 22nd Street S. says their Lenten season begins with evenings of special Bible study to prepare his congregants for Lent. "We don't actually place the ashes on the forehead of our parishioners; it's not our tradition. We explain that ashes are symbolic of death and repentance."

Denying yourself something is an important element of Lent but Harcum explains, "When you put down something that God has called you to stop doing, you need to pick up something that will allow you to get closer to God." He explains, for instance, you may give up potato chips. But the point is really to replace denying yourself something with something encouraging spiritual growth. This may take the form of community engagement "and as people grow spiritually they will choose to give up bad behaviors or negative thoughts instead of giving up snacks and sweets."

Harcum has spent considerable time developing a book of 40 daily meditations for spiritual guidance and growth during the Lenten season. This year it focuses on the actions and inactions of Jesus through the disciples.

The sermons during the Lenten season will focus on prayer, generosity, sacrifice, and the intertwining principle of fellowship. Harcum says as Holy Week approaches a number of Arlington ministers will participate with other churches in community activities. He was set to preach at Lomax the following day.

The Saturday before Palm Sunday there will be a youth celebration to help them understand Easter with the younger children coloring representative pictures and the older ones doing things



PHOTO BY BETSY WHITYCOMBE

The congregation at Rock Spring UCC at 5010 Little Falls Rd. remembers that the original Palm Sunday was a time for waving palms in celebration of Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem but also protesting their current regime.

like writing prayers. Everything culminates with the 9:30 Easter Sunday Service.

At St. Mary's Episcopal Church at 2609 N. Glebe Road the Lenten season starts the night before Ash Wednesday with a pancake supper, "a night of reveling where we have a really good time before we hit Ash Wednesday," according to Rev. Meg Ingalls, interim pastor. Then on Wednesday there are several services with the imposition of ashes "to remember we are made of dust and to dust we will return."

During the Lenten season a series of special activities take place including the Friday night Stations of the Cross led by a group of Laity, soup dinners for the 20s and 30s to encourage fellowship which becomes a discipline, Wednesday with a chance to read some of the letters of Paul and write letters to prisoners at Arlington jail.

Ingalls says, "In the old days we used to give up meat on Friday or sweets, but then moved instead to do something for someone, develop a discipline. This could mean taking on something in the church or the community. We recently had a huge clean up day where we took all of the books out of the pews, cleaned and mulched all of the flower beds, refreshed the church inside and out. There are a lot of things a person could find to do."

Holy Week has special services on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday when she also traditionally has an overnight with the confirmands teaching them different prayers and moral codes.

Then on Saturday night before Easter Sunday the congregation lights the pastoral candle with a new fire replicating the ceremony



PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE

Etchings of Stations of the Cross at St. Mary's Episcopal by a parishioner



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Rev. Craig A. Harcum, Pastor Macedonia Baptist Church

The Sweetness of Lent

Rev. Ingalls' office was comfortable and smelled slightly fragrant. "Oh, that's myrrh that I brought back from the Mideast," she explained.

She said on Sunday the children had play-acted the Biblical story of Lazarus. Christ brought Lazarus back from the dead after four days.

"The children wrapped the child playing Lazarus all over in toilet paper and laid him in the tomb."

Then a little while later the children removed the toilet paper, and the child playing Christ brought Lazarus back to life from the dead.

"The children were so excited when they tore off the toilet paper that they knocked the container of myrrh all over the floor!"

— SHIRLEY RUHE

in Jerusalem where priests go into Jesus' tomb and light their candles to take back to their churches.

"We create the first fire of the year by using a flint in the darkness to create a spark. This sym-

bolizes the life of Christ (the spark of life) has come back into the world. We bless this candle with a whole ceremony around it ending in the ringing of bells and an exultant chant 'The Light of Christ'

three times louder and louder."

Ingalls as an interim pastor brings the tradition of her many experiences in other places to her ministry in Arlington. "My contribution here for Easter has been encouraging children to bring flowers from home on Easter Sunday. The children place their flowers in an empty metal cross which shows that death begins to bloom forth into life."

The Lenten season at Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Church on 2700 19th Street S (OLQP) begins on Ash Wednesday with the imposition of ashes.

During the season OLQP celebrates Lent with a Stone Soup Supper Series where they speak about the tenets of Lent, prayer, fasting and alms giving to extend beyond Lent to those whom society often condemns and abandons. This is held for seven Friday evenings successively beginning on Feb. 20 and ending March 27.

In addition, according to their Social Justice and Outreach Minister Sally-Diaz Wells, OLQP holds a bimonthly fish fry as a way to be in community and to fast and avoid eating meat which is prohibited on Fridays during Lent. The "You Buy We Fry" take out combo fish fry dinner on March 27 dedicates the proceeds to the Youth & Young Adult Ministries work camp mission and pilgrimage trip.

Parishioners are advised to give up something or add something to their Lenten journey. For instance, Diaz-Wells says she added a bible study every Friday and gave up music in her car and office so that she could pray more. She says they ask that everyone fill out a commitment card on Ash Wednesday at the beginning of Lent and then return it on Holy Thursday with a completed list of the things they did during Lent.

The Stations of the Cross ceremony is held Fridays during Lent before the bilingual Light Is On For You Reconciliation service where the Sacrament of Penance is offered each Wednesday evening. Good Friday begins with Reconciliation at 11 am followed by Good Friday of the Lord's Passion at 3 pm, Stations of the Cross in Spanish at 6 pm, and a Tenebrae service in darkness at 8 pm.

On Good Friday, April 3 the entire community is invited to witness the Way of the Cross live with readings, prayers and songs at each of the 14 stations of the passion and death of Jesus beginning with "Jesus is Condemned to Death" and ending with "Jesus is Laid in the Tomb."

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NEWS



PHOTOS BY EDEN BROWN/THE CONNECTION

Barbara Kanninen came out to show her support for democracy. Arlington Police estimated 5,000 Arlingtonians came out to stretch “Hands Across Arlington” from Shirlington to Walker Chapel along Glebe Road.



“Elvis” came out to remind people he is the only king.

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Carol Rivers signs the large poster at Culpepper Garden thanking Arlington's first responders.



Chief Andy Penn (left), Corporal Burgess and Arlington County Board Chair Matt de Ferranti.

Culpepper Garden Honors Arlington First Responders

5th annual event is usually out in the garden, but it wasn't warm enough this year.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

Carol Rivers stands in front of a large poster board inside the lobby at Culpepper Garden writing her thank you note to the Arlington first responders. It is the 5th annual Culpepper First Responders Day on March 18.

ACPD Chief Andy Penn stands chatting with County Board Chair Matt de Ferranti and Colonel Burgess while other police officers circulate around the room sharing stories with the residents. Sheriff Jose Quiroz enters and joins the group.

Due to the 30 degree temperature, the event has been moved inside from the traditional location by the famous daffodil garden but Marta Hill Gray, Executive Director of Culpepper Garden, has brought the springtime inside with her traditional golden suit.

Gray says, "Of all the organizations in Arlington the first responders have been here on a regular basis.

There were 250 calls to our first responders last year. They care for our residents beautifully." She addresses the officers around the room, "Whenever we see you arriving we know we are in good hands."

De Ferranti says Arlington is a great community, and Culpepper



County Board Chair Matt de Ferranti.



Culpepper Garden Executive Director Marta Hill Gray addresses the roomful of first responders on March 18.



Plates are piled high with hamburgers, hot dogs, coleslaw and potato salad at the annual Culpepper Garden First Responders Event.

Garden is a piece of Arlington history. "A community measures itself by how they treat people in the beginning of life, the end of life, in the shadows of life." De Ferranti refers to the county's

very tight upcoming budget and the expectations of all the competing interests. "All of you are looking at me hoping I'll do the right thing."

He continues on a personal

note, "Service is a part of being a first responder. I have a two-year-old and a five-month-old and I know they could be in your hands. I am thankful that we have the first responders so be sure to

find a first responder today and say thank you."

Culpepper Garden is an award winning low-income retirement independent living community in Arlington.

Signage on Bryan Street in Arlington Helps Cure a Rift

Village atmosphere recovering from pandemic and politics.



Rachel Burns, at home on Bryan Street. She made the signs on the street to project positivity after a difficult period for the neighborhood.

BY EDEN BROWN
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

Sometimes you will be driving through Arlington and see something that reminds you that Arlington is really more like a turn of the century village than an urban hub ten minutes from the roiling Capital. You know there is a story behind the huge, beautifully crafted wooden signs proclaiming LOVE, HOPE, PEACE, UNITY and CARE along North Bryan Street. When you ask, her neighbors tell you about Rachel Burns, the creator of the signs, and the fact that she was battling cancer and the neighborhood came out to support her. But then, you find Rachel, enter her warm, busy house with the music parlor, a black upright piano and Bass, decorated in red velvet like an old-timey saloon, and sit at the dining room table with its big bowl of nuts, and hear her tell that story.

LOVE, HOPE, PEACE, UNITY and CARE

and Bass, decorated in red velvet like an old-timey saloon, and sit at the dining room table with its big bowl of nuts, and hear her tell that story.

“I think it’s because we’re very close to DC but it’s almost like we’re in a different world here. It’s always been a neighborhood where there’s been multigenerations living in homes, giving their homes to the younger generations. The kids have always played on the street. I don’t know if it’s because it’s a dead end or what, but pre-pandemic this street was filled the children from 4 o’clock until 8 o’clock at night (in summer) climbing the trees, playing ball, hide and seek. If a parent wanted to know where their child was, the answer was often: ‘Look up in the trees.’ We collectively, as a group of parents, decided we weren’t gonna ‘screen’ our kids. The only time they had screens was Friday

SEE VILLAGE ATMOSPHERE, PAGE 8
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The CARE sign that started the signage: beautiful at the holiday season.



PHOTOS BY EDEN BROWN/THE CONNECTION



CARE.



The UNITY sign that went up after the political angst on the street had dissipated, where originally the TRUMP sign had caused concern.

Village Atmosphere Recovering from Pandemic and Politics

FROM PAGE 7

night and so we would get together at each other's houses and have Friday night movie night. One person would host. All week the kids would negotiate what movie they would watch on the Friday night. It really built a community here, between people of different backgrounds and people of different ages. The kids all grew up kind of like cousins. We propped each other up, watched out for kids, felt the world was okay because our street was full of bikes and trikes and all the signs that joyful children live here."

"This is how it was in 2016 leading up to the election. The house across from ours was owned by a multigenerational family and we all kind of helped raise the kids. We felt responsible for them because their mother was absent. But things changed. In 2016 they put a giant Trump sign - 8-by-4-feet high - on the lawn. A new resident joined the family and the children from the house started going around the neighborhood using negative language and did things like take down the 'Hillary for President' signs and defaced bumper stickers, carving things into the trees. We tried to talk to them. The kids start fighting with each other. I was kind of a 'den mother' so I sat the kids down in my backyard, and told them, 'You know it's freedom of speech and we have to deal with it. Everyone has a perspective.'"

But Burns was just counting the days until the election was over and the sign would come down. She had the same talk with parents in the neighborhood: "We don't have to worry about it. This is temporary. We're here to protect the kids. The sign is gonna come down. The harassment on the street will stop."

"But," she continued, "the day after the election, I walked out of my house and saw that sign. Everything in my body just dropped. I was like, 'that sign is never going away.' This went on for a while and it was physical: how can we move on? I was driving to work, thinking about it. I was in kind of a daze about it. One day I just came to the basement. I looked at the pile of wood we had down there and I just start pulling out wood. I'm handy, but I have never done anything like that and it took me about 10 days. I blasted Maria Callas opera arias as I sawed away and made this LOVE sign. It is



PEACE.

4-feet-by-eight-feet and it has 50 bulbs for the 50 states on the American flag. My husband and I put it up on the porch and we plugged it in.

It was 10 o'clock at night. The couple across the street were sitting on their porch, and when we plugged it in, we heard an audible gasp from the front porch. A day later the TRUMP sign came down."

"People in the neighborhood wanted signs after that. I asked them to pick a word. I do it for free and I do it when I have the time and space. Leading up to the 2024 election, people would come up to us and ask about the signs and when we told the story they said 'this gives us so much hope in humanity.'"

But the story takes a twist here. If you ask now about the signs, you might hear that the origin of the signs was to support Burns as

she went through a difficult cancer diagnosis in 2013. You might hear about Burns' singing group.

Her album "Living Your Breast Life." (You can hear her on any audio platform.) But news reports never mention the genesis of the first sign. And yes, Burns did have to deal with Stage 3 breast cancer, and she turned that experience into a non-profit cancer support organization called "Cancer Culture." The goal of the non-profit is to encourage people with metastatic breast cancer to express themselves with art and culture. "But more importantly, we raise money for metastatic cancer research. We volunteer, do retreats, fundraisers and give 100% of donations to metastatic breast cancer research and support."

It's just one more part of the Rachel Burns story, one more indication that LOVE, and

UNITY, CARE and JOY aren't just signs.

If you walk around Bryan Street today, you won't see so many children out on the street. "The Pandemic had a huge effect on the neighborhood," Burns said. "People kind of scattered back into their homes and watched their screens. The kids still know each other really well, but it's not as vibrant as it used to be."

The big hopeful signs remain, and the lessons of free speech and taking care of children as a village remain, and no doubt will survive the political divisions that try to creep into this city near the center of American politics. Burns has wood for a few more signs, should it come to that.

For more and to donate: see: <https://www.cancerculture.org/ourstory> rachelburns.ffm.to/whatanastywoman and see rachelburnsmusic.com



The original LOVE sign, during the day.

PHOTOS BY EDEN BROWN/THE CONNECTION

BULLETIN BOARD

Submit civic/community announcements at ConnectionNews-papers.com/Calendar. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before the event.

<cal1>Volunteer Drivers Needed
<cal2>Have some extra time to drive a neighbor to a doctor's appointment? You pick the days, times, and places that are convenient for you. There is NO MINIMUM driving requirement. Not only do you help older adults in need, you also get to meet wonderful

folks, often with very interesting backgrounds and stories to tell. The Shepherd's Center of McLean-Arlington-Falls Church (SCMAFC), is an all-volunteer, non-sectarian, non-profit organization. Its mission is providing free transportation to seniors for medical and dental appointments or run errands to grocery stores and pharmacies. To sign up, visit the website at <https://scmafc.org/volunteer>, or email contact@scmafc.org with questions.

DONATIONS NEEDED

Pet Food Bank. AWLA has established a Pet Food Bank to serve qualify-

ing residents of Arlington County and the City of Falls Church. In consideration of the effect financial obstacles have on a pet owner's ability to afford pet care, the AWLA Pet Food Bank program's goal is to keep family pets out of shelters. If you are an Arlington County or City of Falls Church resident and are in need of assistance in feeding your pet, follow this link and fill out a pre-registration form. Visit goo.gl/forms/s2FuFdaYwDZm4t-Pw2.

Donations Needed. Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Church, 2700 South 19th St., is seeking to replenish its food pantry. Particularly needed

are rice (large bags appreciated, the pantry will rebag), dry beans, canned vegetables, soup, small jars of peanut butter, small jars of jelly, pasta and pasta sauce. Donations are collected during Mass each Sunday. Visit www.ourladyqueenof-peace.org for more.

ONGOING

Create a Wildlife Sanctuary. The Audubon at Home Wildlife Sanctuary certification program assists homeowners in restoring their home's natural habitat by providing information on sustainable gardening practices. These practices include using native plants, removing in-

vasive species, reducing use of pesticides and fertilizers, and creating space for native flora and fauna. Visit audubonva.org/audubon-at-home-1/ for more.

Naloxone (Narcan) can save the life of someone who is overdosing, if given in time. Anyone who assists a person in need is protected from liability by the Good Samaritan Law. Naloxone (Narcan) is available without a prescription for a fee at all pharmacies. Obtain it for free by attending a RE-VIVE! training. Contact Emily

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 11

Local Gas Prices Skyrocket Up Along with the Nation

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

Gas prices have skyrocketed in recent weeks with the national average at \$3.97 and over \$5 in some places like California.

In Arlington at a local BP station on Langston Boulevard, the price on March 25 is \$3.79 for regular gas at the pump, with the Washington Metro area averaging just over \$4. A week ago the average was \$3.84, and a month ago it was \$2.90. Gus Odum, owner of the BP station for 14 years, says the price of gas has gone up by \$1 a gallon since the Iran War began.

Odum explains the price of delivery to his station changes every day.

“The price we charge depends on the delivery date and how much profit we want to make. For

instance, if the price is higher on the date I get delivery instead of the date the station next door gets delivery, it can get reflected in the price we charge even though we’re right next door.

“But I prefer to keep my price lower and depend on volume. I like to get customers here to take advantage of our body shop and the snack mart while they are waiting for their car inspection. That’s where I make my profit.”

Odum says during his 14 years he has seen big ups and downs in gas prices.

“Remember 2008 when gas was \$4.50 a gallon, and during Covid I was selling gas for \$1.99 a gallon.”

Gus Odum, owner of the BP station on Langston Boulevard.



PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION

Arlington Flea Market Returns April 4, Forty Years Strong

High-demand resale market reflects growing interest in vintage goods, bargain hunting, and in-person shopping experiences.

More than 1,000 shoppers are expected to arrive before sunrise on Saturday, April 4, as the Arlington Civitan Open Air Flea Market launches its 40th anniversary season, underscoring continued growth in secondhand shopping and the resurgence of high-traffic, in-person community markets.

The opening event is consistently the busiest of the year, with early-bird shoppers lining up in the dark and many high-demand items selling within the first hour. The market’s strong turnout reflects broader consumer trends, as rising retail prices and increased interest in sustainable shopping continue to drive demand for vintage, secondhand, and discounted goods.

Approximately 150 vendors will fill four levels of a parking garage at 4001 15th Street North, Arlington, VA 22207, creating a dense,

fast-moving marketplace where antiques, furniture, vinyl records, tools, clothing, books, jewelry toys, and household goods turn over rapidly throughout the morning.

Unlike traditional outdoor markets, the multi-level garage setting concentrates both foot traffic and inventory, creating a high-energy environment where experienced buyers move quickly and selection changes minute by minute, particularly during the first two hours of operation.

Now in its 40th year, the market remains one of Arlington’s longest-running community events since its founding in 1986. Across its eight-month season, it draws more than 10,000 shoppers annually and continues to serve as a consistent driver of local small-business activity and resale commerce in Northern Virginia.

The Arlington Civitan Open Air

Flea Market operates on the first Saturday of each month from April through November, from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. Vendor spaces routinely sell out in advance, especially for the spring opening, reflecting sustained demand from both sellers and shoppers.

Proceeds from vendor rentals and on-site refreshment sales support charitable initiatives led by the Arlington Civitan Club, a longstanding local service organization.

With peak attendance concentrated in the early morning and inventory moving quickly, attendees are strongly encouraged to arrive before opening to access the widest selection and experience the market at its most active.



Event Details

Arlington Civitan Open Air Flea Market

Saturday, April 4, 7 a.m. – 1 p.m.

4001 15th Street North, Arlington, VA 22207

More Information

Website: <https://arlington-fleamarket.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ArlCivitanfleamarket/>

Update: Potomac River Sewage Spill

Long-term impacts questioned.

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

The Potomac Interceptor's January 19 rupture near the I-495/Clara Barton Parkway interchange which discharged at least 243 million gallons of raw sewage into the Potomac River was a "temporary insult," Michael Rolband, Director of the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), told a March 19 gathering at Alexandria's Lee Center.

"We believe the water is safe for contact," he asserted, but "not recommended for swimming." As the sewage flows down the river, "It gets diluted," he offered and state tests show "no significant impacts to fisheries and recreational activities."

The tests at that time showed E. coli bacteria levels "significantly below all the thresholds," Rolband said, meaning they are below the Environmental Protection Agency's level for unsafe swimming.

He emphasized, however, that people should cook any fish from the Potomac and "wash your hands."

"This is an urban river," Rolband cautioned, with dog and cat excrement and other factors contributing to pollution.

Some untreated sewage ends up in area water bodies normally, Rolband said. "While it's disgusting, it actually happens every time there's a significant rain. There'll always be some, but the river is getting much cleaner," recalling that in the 1970s he could not swim through river's the algae mats.

He commended Alexandria and the District of Columbia for infrastructure projects underway to address their combined sewer overflow systems which send sewage into the river during significant rainfalls. Alexandria's project should be finished this summer; D.C.'s, by 2030.

Matthew Brown, DC Water's Chief Operating Officer, said that the pipe, which carries 60 million gallons of raw sewage daily 54 miles, from Dulles Airport to the Blue Plains Treatment plant in southeast Washington, serves half a million people. His agency avoided two billion gallons of overflow, Brown said and workers hauled off 2,341 tons of debris, equal to 1,300 cars and "pulled out enough



Betsy Nicholas, Potomac Riverkeeper President, shared concerns about the long-term remediation plan.



Dean Naujoks called the spill and his group's response "a wild ride."

rags and wipes to fill a swimming pool."

Flow resumed on March 14 and most recreation advisories have been lifted. DEQ is continuing normal water sampling at Northern Virginia sites like Hunting Creek, Little Hunting Creek, Dogue Creek, Pohick Creek and the Occoquan River.

Local fishing guide Rob Snowhite is hopeful for the spring season. He emailed, "I was hesitant at first and thought the entire year would be a washout. However, the spill was contained and I think we are good to go. I have been selling a lot of shad flies through my ETSY shop so I know local anglers are not discouraged by the spill."

Longer Term

Beyond immediate effects, other impacts like future algae blooms and contaminated sediments concern some people.

George Mason University scientists, in collaboration with the Potomac Riverkeeper, the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin and the Potomac Rivers Fisheries Commission, are studying some long-term spill impacts.

Dr. Cindy Smith at GMU's Potomac Environmental Research and Education Center, said, "We are documenting how water conditions, aquatic life and the river's food web change in real time." From the Woodrow Wilson Bridge south to Piney Point, they are measuring water turbidity, fecal coliforms, cyanobacteria, cyanotoxins, phytoplankton, fish diversity and heavy metals, for example. Others are doing studies upstream. GMU's data "may be collected over multiple years," Smith emailed.

Remediation Plan Questioned

At the March 19 meeting, Aman-



Evan Quinter with the Riverkeepers helped conduct tests.

da Zander, the DC Water's remediation manager, reported that the agency will clean up debris, plant plants and trees, remove materials down to the clay layer and rehabilitate the topsoil, among other steps.

Betsy Nicholas, Potomac Riverkeeper Network President, called the restoration plan "disappointing" at a March 11 gathering at Alexandria's Lost Boy Cider. At that time, there had been "zero public engagement," she charged and said that the plan only focused on the immediate spill area and not long-term impacts. "We need a comprehensive plan," she said.

In a March 27 report, the Riverkeepers called the plan "insufficient to restore impacted communities and the health of the Potomac River."



Michael Rolband, Director of Virginia's DEQ, said he "expects continual improvement in the river."

A 1960s Pipe

What caused the collapse?

"The pipe just got old," Rolband said, adding, "It's a collective problem of our society." The American Society of Civil Engineers' 2025 report card gave the nation's wastewater infrastructure a D+ grade and stormwater a D.

Nicholas concurred: "It's a wake-up call on the infrastructure issues we as a society have been ignoring too long."

The federal government built the pipe in the 1960s. Washington-area U.S. representatives, led by Virginia Congressman Don Beyer, are seeking federal funds to modernize the interceptor and the area's aging water infrastructure.

David Gadis, DC Water's head, closed the March 19 meeting saying, "It's been a very tough 57

days. This was an old pipe. We are doing everything we can to make sure it does not happen again."

Opening the meeting, Alexandria Mayor Alyia Gaskins expressed hope that "we can get answers." Many answers are pending.

Information

DC Water, <https://www.dcwater.com/about-dc-water/media/potomac-interceptor-collapse>

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, <https://www.deq.virginia.gov/news-info/shortcuts/topics-of-interest/potomac-interceptor-collapse>

Virginia Department of Health, www.vdh.virginia.gov

Potomac Riverkeeper Network, <https://potomacriverkeepernetwork.org/>

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Lane Closures on George Washington Memorial Parkway

The National Park Service began lane closures the week of March 23 to resurface sections of the George Washington Memorial Parkway between Spout Run Parkway and Interstate 395 and between Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport and First Street in Alexandria, Virginia. Work will continue through mid-June as weather permits.

The project is needed because these sections of road have worn down over time. Resurfacing them now will help prevent further damage, support safer travel and provide a smoother ride for motorists who use the parkway. Crews will remove the top layer of worn asphalt in both directions and pave the road with new asphalt. This work will help preserve the parkway, improve driving conditions and extend the life of the roadway.

Crews will mill and pave during the day, overnight and on weekends.

Traffic pattern

Crews will begin work on the section of the parkway between Spout Run Parkway and Interstate 395.

Morning rush hour on weekdays (5:30 to 9:30 a.m.): Drivers will have two southbound lanes toward Washington, D.C., and one northbound lane.

Evening rush hour on weekdays (2:45 to 7:15 p.m.): Drivers will have two northbound lanes and one southbound lane toward Washington, D.C.

Midday on weekdays (9:30 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.), overnight (7:15 p.m. to 5:30 a.m.), and on weekends: Drivers will have one lane open in each direction.

Construction may also require ramp closures along the parkway. The National Park Service will share more information about traffic impacts and detours before those closures begin.

Drivers should use caution in work zones, watch for crews and road debris, and follow posted speed limits. Message boards and construction signs along the parkway will provide updated information.



Arrest in Series of Armed Robberies

The Arlington County Police Department's Homicide/Robbery Unit arrested a suspect in a series of armed robberies targeting Arlington County businesses, their employees and customers. The 19-year-old man, of Centreville, Va. is charged with Robbery (x8), Use of a Firearm in the Commission of a Felony (x8) and Wearing a Mask to Conceal Identity (x4). He is being held without bond in the Arlington County Detention Facility.

The suspect's 20 criminal charges stem from the following incidents:

At approximately 7:56 p.m. on Feb. 24, police were dispatched to the 4100 block of S. Four Mile Run Drive for the report of an armed robbery. The masked suspect entered the business, displayed a firearm, demanded the employee open the cash register and stole an

undisclosed amount of cash from the business and the employee. The suspect then directed his attention towards a customer and demanded cash while displaying the firearm. When the customer told the suspect they did not have cash, the suspect fled the scene.

On Feb. 24, following the above-mentioned incident, the masked suspect entered a neighboring business in the 4100 block of S. Four Mile Run Drive, displayed a firearm and demanded the employee open the cash register.

The suspect stole an undisclosed amount of cash from the register and fled the scene.

At approximately 8:19 p.m. on Feb. 25, police were dispatched to the 300 block of N. Glebe Road for the report of a suspicious person. The masked suspect entered the business, approached two employ-

ees, threatened them with a firearm and demanded cash. The employees ran from the scene and the suspect fled on foot without cash.

On Feb. 25, following the above-mentioned incident, the masked suspect entered a neighboring business in the 4200 block of N. Pershing Drive, displayed a firearm and stole an undisclosed amount of cash from the register. The suspect then directed his at-

tention towards two customers and demanded cash while displaying the firearm. After determining the customers did not have cash, the suspect fled the scene.

During the course of the investigation, detectives recovered information linking the cases together and subsequently identified the suspect. He was taken into custody at his home on the morning of March 20.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation, Fairfax County Police Department and the Herndon Police Department provided assistance in this case.

This remains an active investigation and anyone with information related to this incident is asked to contact the Arlington County Police Department's tip line at 703-228-4180 or ACPDTipline@arlingtonva.us.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 8

Siqveland at 703-228-0913 or esiqveland@arlingtonva.us or visit health.arlingtonva.us/opioid-awareness/ for available training sessions. The Chris Atwood Foundation also offers training to the public. Visit www.chrisatwoodfoundation.org/naloxone for details.

Aging Matters. 2-3 p.m. Tuesdays on WERA 96.7 LP FM on Arlington's community radio station. Each week host Cheryl Beversdorf interviews individuals with expertise about a broad array of aging related topics affecting the lives of older adults and their loved ones. Visit www.facebook.com/aging-matterswera to listen to programs.

<https://www.mixcloud.com/AgingMatters/>
Volunteer Bike Repair Night. First Tuesday of the month, 6-9 p.m. at Phoenix Bikes, Barcroft Park, 4200 S. Four Mile Run Drive. Volunteers gather to refurbish bikes, sort parts or help with essential tasks. No experience necessary.

Arlington/Alexandria Bikers Protest Closure of 15th Street Bike Lane

Cyclists hope Virginia senators can use a legislative rider to block bike lane destruction.



Dana Bres, who used to commute into D.C. on his bike, came down to protest the closure of the 15th Street Protected Bike Lane, joining hundreds of other angry bikers.



The 15th Street Protected Bike Lane has reduced congestion and accidents but Trump administration officials say traffic flow and capacity must be increased for tourists. The federal government plans to remove protected bike lanes along 15th Street NW, including the National Mall stretch, as well as Ohio Drive SW and East Basin Drive.



David Bouk is a longtime cycling activist and Alexandria resident who belongs to a group of bikers called the Wednesday Irregulars, and the WABA. He was downtown to bring attention to the destruction of the bike lane, which he compared to other Trump administration decisions altering key public amenities such as the redesign of the Hains Point golf links.

BY EDEN BROWN
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

For Arlington cyclists who often use their two wheelers to commute into work in Washington, D.C., the plan to do away with the 15th Street protected bike lane was personal. While the Federal Highway Administration and National Park Service argued the 15th street bike lane restricts vehicle traffic flow and runs counter to their plan to increase capacity for motorists during peak tourist season, some cyclists said this was just pure “Trump administration opposition to urban bike lanes.” The 15th Street NW/SW protected lanes that connect to the National Mall and 14th Street Bridge were completed in phases, with major segments built in 2021. The initial 15th Street protected bike lane opened in 2010. Crashes have been reduced by almost 50 percent thanks to the bike lanes. About 4,000 cyclists use the lane daily.

The Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA) filed a lawsuit to halt the removal, arguing it violates the required public process and reduces safety. The lawsuit delayed dismantling the bike lane to at least March 30.

“We’re here to raise awareness,” said Dave Knack of Arlington. “Executive branch agencies have been empowered to whatever the hell they want but the consequences of doing so are serious. It sends to governments across America a message that this stuff (bike lanes and pedestrian safety) is frivolous, and we don’t have to have it and the car is paramount. That’s a bunch of crap. It’s the wrong point of view.”

Dana Bres, an Arlingtonian who spent 20 years supporting disaster recovery efforts with HUD and FEMA, commuted into his D.C. office on his bike and came to protest the removal of the bike lane with others who



Dave Knack, from Arlington, took time to come protest the destruction of the bike lane in favor of car traffic downtown.

viewed it as a direct attack on those who try to stay fit and safe while reducing congestion downtown. Bres said if the lawsuit fails to stop the bike lane destruction, Virginia’s U.S. Senators Mark Warner and Tim Kaine could put a rider on upcoming legislation, using legislative language to cause the District to fix this issue.

For more on the Washington Area Bicycle Association (WABA) see: <https://waba.org>

For more on the Bicycle Advisory Commission in Arlington County, see: <https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Commissions-and-Advisory-Groups/Bicycle-Advisory-Committee>

Plans in High Gear For 2026 NVSO

Michael Coleman of Falls Church and newly elected Chair of the Northern Virginia Senior Olympics has predicted another record year for participation. “For the past few years NVSO has been growing both in participation and recognition,” said Coleman. The dates for 2026 are Sept. 9 – Oct. 4 with several events taking place prior to the official opening, Saturday, Sept. 19 at the Thomas Jefferson Community Center in Arlington.

SENIOR OLYMPICS Coleman said that the registration fee remains the same at \$20 which covers an unlimited number of events. Registration is online only at www.nvso.us.

“A new event this year is the popular game of Darts plus other events and venues are being considered,” he said. Eligibility to participate include a person must be 50 years of age by Dec. 31, 2026 and live in one of the sponsoring jurisdictions. Sponsoring jurisdictions are the counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Fauquier, Loudoun and Prince William plus the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax and Falls Church.

Most events are held in 5, 10 and 20 year age groups and some by gender. Events are held indoors and outdoors, plus all events which take place in venues throughout Northern Virginia are open to the public.

Additional support comes from Gold, Silver and Bronze Patrons which to date include The Beacon Newspapers, CareFirst Blue Cross Blue Shield, The Mather Tysons, United Healthcare, Koons Arlington Toyota, Seniors Helping Seniors and Woodlands Retirement Community.

Photos and results from previous years, rules for each event and information about becoming a volunteer are on the website at www.nvso.us.

ENTERTAINMENT

CENTERS FOR OPPORTUNITY ARLINGTON

The Centers for Opportunity Arlington is a safe, stigma-free place to spend time for those recovering from homelessness, substance use, and mental illness. It has a donation closet that needs adult clothing and shoes. Some participants at the Center are looking for jobs and need the proper attire. Located at 3219 Columbia Pike, Suite 101, Arlington. Contact Greg, Program Coordinator at 703-567-1346.

VOLUNTEER FOR ARLINGTON'S COMMUNITY AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

Arlington Neighborhood Village, in partnership with Arlington County and Marymount University, has started the Community Ambassador Program (CAP). CAP is a volunteer fueled system that identifies "Ambassadors" connected with civic associations, faith communities, senior centers, apartment buildings, etc. These individuals will be trained to be a reliable source of information about the many opportunities available to older adults in Arlington.

Ambassadors will spread the word about programs and support services, opportunities for social and civic engagement, and educational and enrichment activities for older adults in their own neighborhoods. They are actively recruiting ambassadors to act as a bridge between their community and the Arlington safety net, providing information and soliciting feedback to improve offerings that help older adults remain safe, independent, engaged, and connected to their community.

Contact cap@anvarlington.org if this is something you are interested in or want to learn more. Let's work together to create a supported and connected community for all ages!

Receive Support Services: Are you a senior in Arlington? Do you need support services but don't know where to look? Are you looking for fun and enriching activities in Arlington? Email or call 703-509-8057 and they will connect you with an Ambassador.

THE MARJORIE HUGHES FUND FOR CHILDREN

The Marjorie Hughes Fund for Children (MHF), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit serving Arlington Public Schools (APS) students, helps underinsured and uninsured students obtain medical and dental services and other necessary medical care. Established in 1992 to honor the work of public health physician Marjorie F. Hughes, who dedicated her career to public school students in Arlington, MHF is made up of Public Health School Nurses, School Health Aides, APS staff, and community stakeholders. In collaboration with pediatric office staff and dental providers, MHF pays for school entry and sports physical exams, dental treatments, assists with the purchase of medications or medical equipment, and provides transportation via UberHealth rides to doctor and dentist appointments. MHF services are supported entirely by generous donations and grants, and they have helped students throughout Arlington schools, from kindergarten to high school, to be happy, healthy, and ready to learn. To learn more about MHF, its mission, its work, and to make a contribution, visit <https://www.marjoriehughesfund.com/>.

YEAR ROUND ON SUNDAYS

Farmer's Market. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. At Casa Chirilagua Community Center, 4109 Mt. Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Experience fresh foods, native plants, artisan crafts, music and community at Four Mile Run Farmers & Artisans Market in the heart of Arlandria outside the Casa Chirilagua Community Center, every Sunday 9-1 p.m.

FRESHFARM OPEN YEAR-ROUND

FRESHFARM Ballston Market will now operate year-round, providing residents and visitors with continued access to locally grown produce and goods even through the winter months. Located at Welburn Square (901 N Taylor St., Arlington) just steps from the Ballston Metro, the market operates Thurs-



Handmade History Day will be held on Saturday, April 4, 2026 at Ball-Sellers House Museum in Arlington.

days from 3-6 p.m. The market features a lineup of 20 regular and rotating farmers and producers, and shoppers can enjoy nearly everything needed for a complete grocery shop, from hearty winter squash and leafy greens to eggs, meats, pantry staples, and prepared foods, while supporting regional farmers and producers year-round. Visit freshfarm.org/markets/ballston.

NOW THRU APRIL 5

Easter Bunny at Fashion Centre at Pentagon City. At 1100 S Hayes St, Arlington. The Easter Bunny will be available through Easter Sunday (April 5), located on the First Level, Nordstrom Court. The Bunny Photo Experience will be open daily, and reservations are strongly encouraged. New this year, hop into the fun at our KIDZ BOP Bunny Dance Parties. Every hour on the hour, kids can dance along with the Bunny to upbeat KIDZ BOP hits and easy-to-follow moves.

SATURDAY/APRIL 4

Arlington Flea Market Returns. 7:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. At 4001 15th Street North, Arlington. More than 1,000 shoppers are expected to arrive before sunrise on Saturday, April 4, as the Arlington Civitan Open Air Flea Market launches its 40th anniversary season, underscoring continued growth in secondhand shopping and the resurgence of high-traffic, in-person community markets. Approximately 150 vendors will fill four levels of a parking garage, creating a dense, fast-moving marketplace where antiques, furniture, vinyl records, tools, clothing, books, jewelry, toys, and household goods turn over rapidly throughout the morning. The Arlington Civitan Open Air Flea Market operates on the first Saturday of each month from April through November, from 7:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

SATURDAY/APRIL 4

Handmade History Day. 1-4 p.m. At Ball-Sellers House Museum, Arlington. The Ball-Sellers House Museum season opening day welcomes you to explore how colonial Virginia made things we now buy. The c. 1750 farmhouse will host demonstrations and "do-it-yourself" experiences. From A-Z, including pottery, textiles, woodworking, and much more.

TUESDAY/APRIL 7

14th Annual Legislative Breakfast. 7:45 to 9:30 a.m. At Army Navy Country Club, 1700 Army Navy Drive, Arlington. The Arlington Chamber of Commerce will host the 14th Annual Legislative Breakfast, sponsored by Nestlé. This event will offer attendees the opportunity to hear about the recent General

Assembly session from the legislators who represent Arlington in Richmond. Arlington's representatives in the House of Delegates and the Senate of Virginia will discuss the legislation that they sponsored, the issues that the General Assembly took up, and the economic and political outlook for the Commonwealth of Virginia for the year. The event will also feature a question and answer portion.

WEDNESDAY/APRIL 8

Coffee and Conversation with Arlington Neighborhood Village. 10-11 a.m. Via Zoom. Featuring End of Life Doula Jane Euler, co-founder of Present for You LLC, will explain the services End-of-Life Doulas provide and how their work both complements and differs from hospice care. Doulas offer non-medical support that works in tandem with the dying person, their care circle and the medical team to ensure that the individual's needs are seen, heard, and honored. End-of-Life Doulas also help loved ones and caregivers better understand care options and navigate the healthcare system during an often overwhelming time. Through compassionate presence and guidance, doulas strive to support the emotional and spiritual well-being of clients and their families throughout the end-of-life journey. You have the option to dial in by phone at 929-205-6099. The meeting ID is 889 4857 7106 and the Passcode: 872327

FRIDAY/APRIL 10

Blossom Pop-Up Market. 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. At Ballston Quarter, Arlington. Celebrate the season in full bloom at our Blossom Pop-up Market on April 10th from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. This vibrant spring market brings together a curated selection of local makers, offering everything from handmade goods to unique gifts, perfect for welcoming the warmer days ahead.

SATURDAY/APRIL 11

Earth Day Cleanup. Join Eco Action Arlington at its annual Earth Day Cleanup to remove trash and debris from our parks and streams from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM. This event is family friendly; all children under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult. Groups are welcome. Advance registration required. Register online now. Lead volunteers are needed for this event.

SATURDAY/APRIL 11

Chamber Dance Project's Red & Black Gala. At Washington Golf and Country Club, 3017 N. Glebe Road, Arlington. This evening honors Founding Artistic Director Diane Coburn

Bruning in her final season—a moving celebration of her extraordinary legacy and lasting impact. Enjoy cocktails, a festive dinner, and an encore performance by our dancers and musicians, then dance the night away to live music by Mosche Brass. The night features a vibrant lineup of performances, from an intimate cello and piano duet, jazz selections by acclaimed vocalist Lena Seikaly, with repertoire favorites Berceuse, Night & Day, and the spirited Cowboys, Don't Fence Me In.

SATURDAY/APRIL 11

Comedy Karaoke Trivia Funtime Show. 7:30 p.m. At Highline RxR, 2010 Crystal Drive, Arlington. Bring a team or fly solo and win prizes by dropping knowledge in a trivia competition, then duking it out in a karaoke battle. Hosted by Christian Hunt, this amazing experience features comedy from the DC area's finest comics. The headliner for April's show is the hilarious Sandi Benton.

SATURDAY/APRIL 11

VHC Community Wellness Fair. 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. At the Outpatient Pavilion, 1851 N. George Mason Drive, Arlington. VHC Health is hosting a free Community Wellness Fair. The event will feature free health screenings (for age 18+), wellness resources, and opportunities to meet VHC Health experts. Questions? Email CommunityWellness@vhchealth.org

SATURDAY/APRIL 11

National Chamber Ensemble Concert: Musical Gems of Ecuador: A Violinist's Journey. 7:30 p.m. At Marymount University, Ballston Center Auditorium, 1000 N. Glebe Road, Arlington. Tickets and more info is available now through the National Chamber Ensemble's website: www.NationalChamberEnsemble.org. Tickets: General admission \$45, students \$25.

APRIL 18-19

Spring 2026 Open Studios Event. At Columbia Pike Artist Studios, 932 S. Walter Reed Drive, Arlington. Columbia Pike Artist Studios will open its doors for a behind-the-scenes showcase and sale of recent works. The 21 participating artists approach a wide range of subject matter and employ highly individualized styles. Many are well known in the region, exhibiting their work in galleries in the DMV and beyond. The artists will be available to discuss their processes and answer questions. Dates: Saturday, April 18, 2026, 2:00–5:00 p.m.; Sunday, April 19, 2026, 2:00–5:00 p.m. Participating artists are: Karen Bland, Laura Bollettino, Rhys Conlon, Jaqui Falkenheim, Helen Ginberg, Anne Hancock, Carl Lenartson, Sharon Malley, Joanne Mazarella, Susan McElhinney, Nan Morrison, Kimberley Murphy-Lyons, Bridget Murphy, Robbie Namy, Margaret Panas, Ursula Seckel, Marta Sewell, Margaret Stewart, Monica Stroik, Alice Whealin, and Ghada Zaytoun.

SATURDAY/APRIL 18

Columbia Pike Culture Fest. 12:00–6:00 p.m. At Arlington Mill Community Center, Arlington. This vibrant celebration will feature live cultural performances, local food vendors, art, music, and interactive experiences highlighting the diverse communities that make up the Pike. Bring your friends and family for an afternoon of culture, connection, and fun.

SUNDAY/APRIL 19

Live Band Student Concert. 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. At Busboys & Poets in Shirlington. Piano & More, a Northern Virginia nonprofit providing in-home music lessons, will celebrate its 10-year anniversary with a Live Band Student Concert. This is a private school event for Piano & More students and families, featuring student performers playing alongside a live band in a full concert setting, complete with stage lighting, a live audience, and a dinner experience. The event is designed as a special milestone for students and families, with a

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 15

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55+ Programs are in person at 55+ Centers unless otherwise noted. A 55+ Pass is required to participate (starting at a \$30 annual fee). To join or register, go to registration.arlingtonva.us or call 703-228-4747.

Northern Virginia Senior Olympics (NVSO) looking for volunteers to assist event directors at a variety of events, Sept. 19 – Oct. 10 plus person to write press releases and contact potential Patrons. Experienced volunteer Webmaster also needed. Email Judy Massabny for further details at jmassa@arlingtonva.us.

55+ Ice Skating, Mondays at the MedStar Capitals Iceplex in Ballston Quarter, parking (\$1) on roof level 8, Fee (\$1) includes skate rental, 8:40-9:50 a.m. Pre-registration required at <https://www.medstarcapitaliceplex.com>, register for Senior Public Skate.

Hearing loss tech to the rescue by Debbie Jones with the Northern Virginia Resource Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons who will discuss assistive technologies and Virginia's Technology Assistance Program, Wednesday, April 1, 1 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Registration # 913500-02.

Off our Rockers, join the open rehearsal of this grown-up garage band Wednesday, April 1, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m., Madison Community Center. Come sing along, dance or just listen to the playlist of hits from the 50s to the 70s. Drop-in.

Woodcarvers meet to enjoy camaraderie and pursue their craft Thursday, April 2, 1-4 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Members of the group are available to provide instruction; some tools are available. Drop-in.

First Friday Social at Arlington Mill 55+ Center, April 3, 1 p.m., kick off the month with good company and great conversation with music and light refreshments. Registration # 913801-05.

Movie matinee, "The First Wives Club" (1996) (PG), Friday, April 3, 12:30 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Registration # 913804-02.

Pollinators and you, learn about Virginia's pollinators like bees, butterflies and bats, Friday, April 3, 11 a.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Presented by Arlington Park Naturalist, Nayeli Arellano. Registration # 913400-15.

Arlington Spellbinders, folks who love to tell stories, to schools, senior centers and more, to meet Friday, April 3, 9:30 a.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Drop-in.

55+ Travel group will attend an afternoon baseball game between the Washington Nationals and Los Angeles Dodgers, Saturday, April 4. Cost \$91, Arlington resident; \$105, non-resident. Registration # 902604-03.

Step-by-step painting demonstration with a Community Arts Programmer as they present a step-by-step demonstration Monday, April 6, 10:30 a.m., virtual. Picture and supply list

sent prior to class. Registration # 913303-02.

Pickleball for all ages, no 55+ Pass required, Monday, April 6 and Friday, April 10, 12:30-4 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Intergenerational Wingspan Night at Long Branch Nature Center, Tuesday, April 7, 5:30 p.m. Learn about birds while playing the popular boardgame of Wingspan. Open to all ages; no 55+ Pass required. Registration # 913600-03.

Safety panel, part 2, will hear from the VHC Trauma Department and Rehabilitation about what happens when a patient arrives in the ER and the process of follow-up care, Tuesday, April 7, 1 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Registration # 9133400-05. Attendance at part 1 not required to attend part 2.

Langston-Brown 55+ Center book club will discuss "Life After Power" by Jared Cohen, Tuesday, April 7, 1 p.m. Drop-in.

Intro to ukulele, no experience necessary, taught by volunteer Sandy O'Shea, Tuesday, April 7, Walter Reed 55+ Center. Limited ukuleles available. Registration # 913304-03.

Supper Club, casual and fun dinner party, participants bring their own dinner, non-alcoholic beverage and dessert provided by Arlington Mill 55+ Center Advisory Committee and AASP, Wednesday, April 8, 6 p.m. Registration # 913801-02.

Stop mumbling, I can't hear you! Bonnie O'Leary, hearing loss specialist, discusses the impact late-onset hearing loss has on everyone in a relationship, Wednesday, April 8, 1 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Learn effective communication strategies. Registration # 913500-03.

55+ Travel group to attend a concert at Strathmore Music Center in North Bethesda, MD, featuring Grammy winner, Angélique Kidjo, Thursday, April 9. Cost \$99, Arlington resident; \$114, non-resident. Registration # 902604-05.

Paper quilling, using a few basic tools to wind paper strips into coils and create beautiful raised images of flowers, butterflies and more, Thursday, April 9, 1:30 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Taught by instructor Joni Leonardo. Cost \$20. Registration # 913310-05.

Secret lives of famous fakers presented by Community Arts Programmer Jennifer Droblyen, Thursday, April 9, 9 a.m., virtual. Participants will delve into the bios of several well-known forgers and learn how they were caught. Registration # 913302-08.

Bunco Bunch participants enjoy this dice game of luck, no prior experience needed, Friday, April 10, 1:30 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Registration # 913600-06.

55+ Travel group will attend a performance of the American Festival Pops Orchestra: Celebrating America's 250 Years at the Hylton Performing Arts Center in Manassas, Saturday, April 11. Cost \$70, Arlington resident; \$81, non-resident. Registration # 902604-06.

Behind the scenes at the Kennedy Center with 55+ volunteer George Cecchetti who will

share his nearly 40 years experience as a Center volunteer and Friend, Monday, April 13, 1:30 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Registration # 913400-21.

Travel Guru and 55+ volunteer John Bennette will share his experiences from travels in Paris, Nimes, Avignon and Lyon, France, Monday, April 13, 1 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Registration # 913400-24.

Colored Pencils: Leaves and Dew: join artist and educator Sandra Philips for two beginner-friendly, step-by-step art sessions, Mondays, April 13 and April 20, 1 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Materials not provided; see registration receipt for a complete supply list. Registration # 913303-04.

Samba and Mocktails, learn to play this intricate variation of Canasta played with a partner using six decks of cards, Monday, April 13, 11 a.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Presented by 55+ volunteer Judy Wall. Beginners welcome. Registration # 913600-13.

Latte Lounge with the Walter Reed 55+ Center Advisory Committee, Tuesday, April 14, 1 p.m. Learn about the Committee's role and offer suggestions for new programs. Registration # 913801-07.

Arlington County Recycling Made Easy, join Doug Krietemeyer from the County's Department of Environmental Services as he describes the Dos and Don'ts of recycling, Tuesday, April 14, 11 a.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Registration # 913400-12.

Haiku, a Japanese nature poetry form, taught by award-winning writer Rick Black, Tuesday, April 14, 2 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Registration # 913300-10.

Memory Café is a comfortable environment where people with dementia and their family caregivers can socialize and enjoy meaningful dementia-friendly activities together, Thursday, April 16, 1:30 – 3 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Led by Arlington Adult Day Care and Library staff. For more information and to let us know you're coming, call Adult Services Librarian Zoe Mann at 703-228-5193.

Celebrate Earth Month with earth-friendly cooking demonstrated by Virginia Cooperative Extension and Eco Ambassadors, Thursday, April 16, 1 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Learn energy-saving methods like eco-friendly recipes and simple ways to reduce your kitchen footprint. Registration # 913501-09.

Generative AI - Beyond Basics, improve prompting skills and become a more advanced user through simple techniques, presented by 55+ volunteer Barbara Phillip, Friday, April 17, 1 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Some Generative AI knowledge required. Registration # 913403-10.

Annual Trash and Treasure Sale at Aurora Hills 55+ Center, open to the public, Saturday, April 18, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Sale includes household goods, decorative items, small appliances, games, toys, jewelry, craft materials and more. Items for the sale can be dropped off on Wednesday, April 15 and Friday, April 17, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. For additional information, call 703-228-5722.

Impractically Speaking



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Due to the closure of my local Truist Bank branch - and its equally accessible ATM, I have been living a non-cash existence. Though I have a supermarket nearby which enables me to get cash back when using my debit card (and by overpaying the supermarket's tab), the damage you might say, has already been done - in my head anyway. To even get to the cash, I have to use a debit card so I'm not exactly avoiding the problem as much as I'm contributing to it. And though I couldn't pay with the debit card unless I had a sufficient balance to the tethered account, nonetheless I feel as if I'm taking from one account to pay for another. It feels almost like churning. Except in this instance, I'm spending my own money, but it's not money that's actually in hand. Rather it's plastic in the wallet. And though it ultimately serves the same purpose/master, it feels - to me, as if I'm taking from Peter to pay Paul - and I'm neither Peter nor Paul. In short, I feel constrained and careless in the same transaction, if that makes any sense?

Underlying the previous paragraph's sentiment; having cash in actual hand/wallet represents - to me anyway, a kind of affordability/success that I don't feel when paying with plastic. Paying with plastic seems like bad planning. Moreover, not having enough cash represents a kind of failure to communicate (not between Paul Newman's character Luke Jackson and Strother Martin, his overseer on a prison farm, from the classic "Cool Hand Luke") but between you and your bank. As if you don't know how to manage - or you don't have enough, money. Either way, you're not going to influence people or make any friends (an ode to Dale Carnegie). Pulling out a credit card to pay your way doesn't carry the same weight/affect as fanning out however many \$100 bills are necessary to pay what's due. Cash seems more impressive/responsible somehow.

I understand that the evolution (or is that a revolution) of our economy from brick and mortar to online and not in person generally prevents the use of cash. These days, cash is no longer king. It's maybe a prince. And if one is not going to become a pauper when always using credit cards, it requires strict adherence to a recurring reconciliation of what's going where and who pays what, when. And that may require a "particular set of skills" or Liam Neeson to manage the incoming and this ongoing outgoing. Or the money will simply be taken with minimal understanding.

I am aware, and it's certainly a choice - but hardly a consideration, that I can debit from non-Truist automatic teller machines. However, I hate the fees associated with those withdrawals almost as much as I hate drivers who back into parking spaces - but that's a whole 'nother column which was published in this space months ago, so I won't bore you on the topic any more than I already have. But I don't see my debit card as a primary payor of stuff as I figure the money in the checking is there for other bill-related reasons. Its use is not supposed to abuse the privilege, so to speak, of having money not yet budgeted. I want to go forward with my money, not backwards and debiting often feels "bassackwards."

I imagine much of this rambling doesn't make any sense - or cents either, and that's exactly my point. Money doesn't grow on plastic any more than it grows on trees. I have to think about how I'm spending if I want to grow rich (sort of Napoleon Hill).

Kenny Lourie is an Advertising Representative for The Potomac Almanac & The Connection Newspapers.

ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 13

limited capacity of 80 seated guests and 15 student performers. Each performer registration includes the student and three guest tickets with a 3-course meal.

WEDNESDAY/APRIL 22
Shining a Light on Hunger. 6-9:30 p.m.

At Army Navy Country Club. Shining a Light on Hunger is AFAC's largest annual fundraising event and will be held on Wednesday, April 22, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.-9:30 p.m. at Army Navy Country Club. Come celebrate AFAC's Spring Fiesta! This year they're featuring a live band, a margarita bar along with lots of laughter and fun as they commemorate 37 years of

fulfilling our mission and fighting food insecurity! Your support for this event will help AFAC provide groceries to the 4,200+ families that come to our doors weekly.

For more event information and sponsorship details, contact Jolie Smith, Chief Development Officer, at holie.smith@afac.org or (571) 384-1443

Stone Bridge Puppets Capture Attention

Arresting likenesses of Trump and cohorts, made of papier maché.

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

The big papier maché puppets looming over the bridge turned heads and generated a steady soundtrack of toots and honks as vehicles sped up and down the south George Washington Memorial Parkway in Mount Vernon on March 28, No Kings Day. The protestors waved homemade signs, swirled American flags and wore pointed stickers, hats and creative costumes under a bright afternoon sun. And even “America’s only king,” Elvis Presley, showed up.

Led by Mount Vernon organizer Lisa Finn, the 250 locals chanted, “No kings!” “No thrones!” “No monarchy!” “No war.” The event was one of over 3,000 across the country, the third nationwide protest dubbed “No Kings” decrying the Trump administration’s policies. “Everyone needs to show up for

democracy,” said Arina van Breda. “We’re going to lose it if we don’t protest. Protesting and voting. It’s that or revolution.”

Ann Allman said, “It’s not a fight about right and left. It’s a fight about right and wrong.”

Her husband, Frank Zulino added, “It’s necessary to protect our democracy, which I never thought I’d have to say.”

Local Methodist minister Kerry Kincannon echoed these sentiments. “I don’t want to live in an autocracy,” he said. “I want to live in a democracy. Our faith calls us to be inclusive of all and to respect the integrity of every life.”

Earlier that day, a throng of thousands marched across the Memorial Bridge past the Lincoln Memorial and on to the Washington Monument, starting at the site of Trump’s proposed 250-foot triumphal arch, which would be larger than Paris, France’s 164-foot-tall Arc de Triomphe.

Saturday’s demonstrations in all 50 states exceeded June’s number of 2,100 events and October’s 2,700.

The protestors denounced the U.S. war in Iran, policies leading to rising gas prices, immigration crackdowns and authoritarian-like governance.

Gregory Henschel remarked, “It is my duty as a citizen to join with neighbors to express my deep dis-



PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH

The protestors posed with the puppet likenesses of Trump officials, here, Kash Patel, Steven Miller, Karoline Leavitt, J. D. Vance, Pete Hegseth and Pam Bondi.

appointment with the Trump administration.”

An “Art Build” for the Big Day

Mount Vernon-area resident Marcos Smyth, a retired goldsmith, created the unique papier maché heads, measuring about two feet in diameter, by squeezing together wads of newspaper, pa-

per bags and white glue and then sculpting and painting them into human likenesses. The group covered cardboard toilet paper rolls with duct tape layers to hold the poles that support the heads. The self-named Stone Bridge Resistance organizers held “art builds” in Finn’s driveway to paint caricatures of key Trump administra-

tion officials. The caricatures have gotten national attention in media outlets like USA Today.

Finn says that their weekly Thursday 5 p.m. protests on the bridge will continue indefinitely and that they welcome all.

Information: www.nokings.org; Stone Bridge Resistance on Facebook.



Ron Taylor protested as Elvis Presley, “America’s only king.”



Around 250 people protested on the stone bridge crossing the south George Washington Memorial Parkway.